

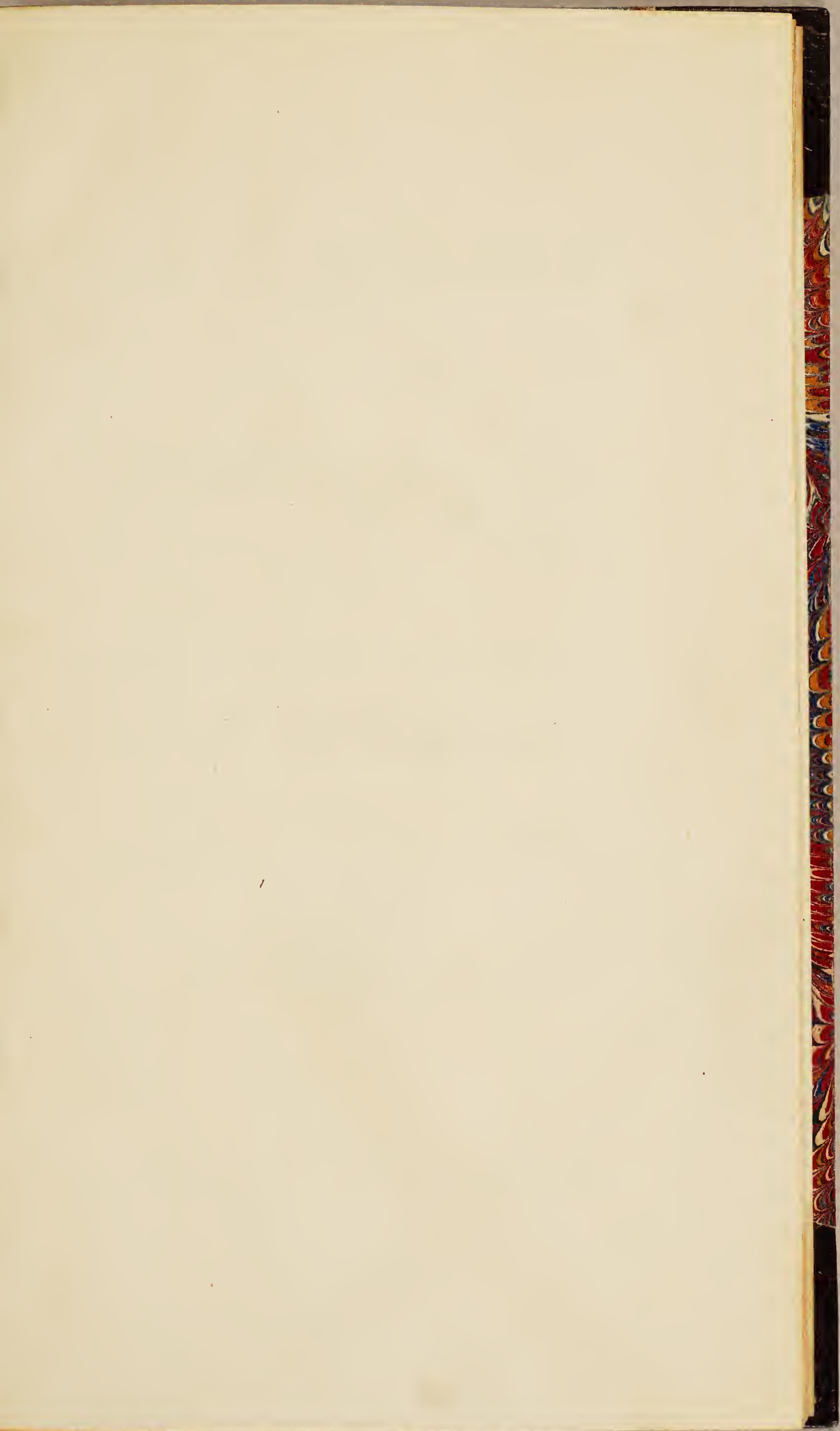


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John Carter Brown.



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By Joshua Steele

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AN
ACCOUNT
OF A LATE
CONFERENCE
ON THE
OCCURRENCES in AMERICA.

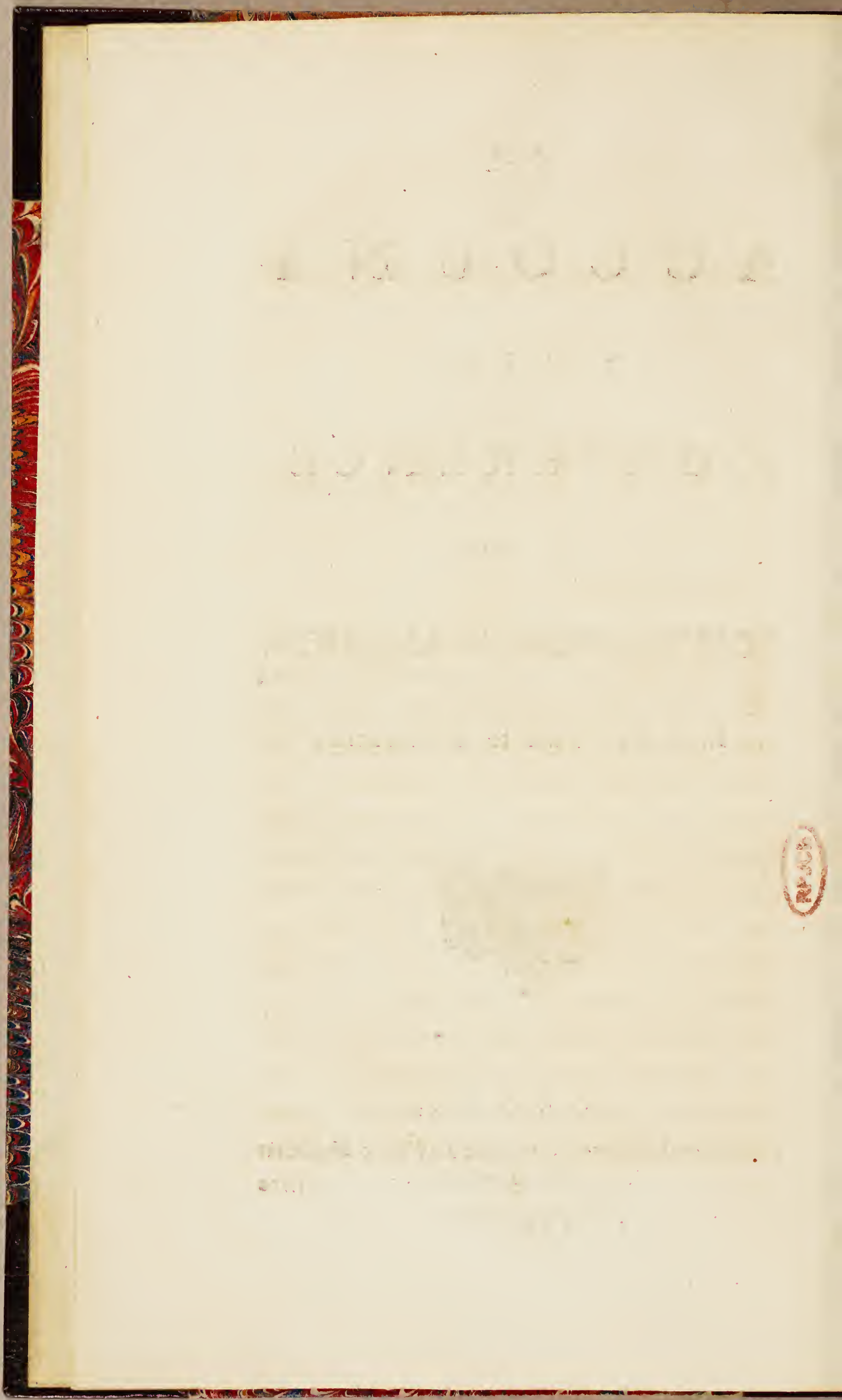
In a LETTER to a FRIEND.



L O N D O N;

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A

L E T T E R, &c.

DEAR SIR,

I WAS down at my friend ——'s villa spending the Christmas holidays, when I was favoured with your letter, requiring me to send you an account of the most prevailing opinions concerning the *occurrences in America*, as they have been happily called;—and it fell out, fortunately enough for my purpose, that there were four or five gentlemen in our company, who, having brought down all the late American prints, scarcely talked of any thing else;—whereupon, as I found they were all men of acute understandings, tho' of different opinions on the subject, I contrived without much difficulty to cast them

B

into

into a conversation, or argumentative discussion of the several points in dispute; which having set down, as well as my memory would allow me, I here give you, as the best answer I can make to your letter.

The principal speakers were Mr. LEICESTER, Mr. CORNISH, Mr. FERGUS, Mr. CONNER, and Mr. PENN; and I set them on the argument, by observing to them, as they seemed all to have well considered the matter that gave rise to these occurrences, and each to be the master thereof in his own way, that it would be highly entertaining, and perhaps also useful to some of us, if they would communicate and compare their thoughts on the subject at large;—when Mr. Leicester began thus; I can pass an hour or two, in such a conversation, with a great deal of pleasure, though I must observe, that for the most part, there's no end answered, in discoursing vaguely, as people ordinarily do, on points of this nature, without having any fixed principles; wherein being agreed, they may come to some reasonable conclusions;

fions ;—for instance, and to the purpose now under our consideration,—what is the spirit of the British constitution, in the business of taxing ?—is it not, that no free born subject shall be taxed, otherwise than by his own consent personally, or by his representative, or by a majority of his fellow citizens, or their representatives ?

PENN.

Certainly, we may all admit this as a fundamental principle of the constitution.

ALL.

Agreed !

CORNISH.

Neither do we ever vary from this principle ; at least, not since the reign of the unfortunate Prince who paid for the contrary experiment with his head ;—but I understand that the members of the B—sh P—t are the representatives of all the B—sh people, wherever residing.

FERGUS.

Aye, surely.

PENN.

Pardon me, gentlemen, if I differ from you, and endeavour to define this a little

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more

more nicely.—The members of the B—sh P—t can only be the representatives of those who have the power of chusing them, and that power is confined to those only who have property and residence within the island. Wherefore, according to this definition, (which is no other than a description of what we all know to be the plain matter of fact,) none but the *proprietors* of this island alone have representatives in the B— P—.

C O N N O R.

I am intirely of Mr. Penn's opinion, and by considering his definition together with the fundamental laid down by Mr. Leices-ter, it seems clear to me, that, though in a general sense, we are all fellow subjects, whether our properties lie in Britain, Ireland, or America, yet are we not fellow citizens with respect to parliamentary rights, no more than a citizen of London, is of course a citizen of York, that is, his being a freeman of one of those cities does not qualify him to serve an office in the other; he, whose landed property lies in Britain, is a citizen of that island, and if he has likewise landed property in a province of
America,

America, he may be a citizen also there ; but the one does not, *ipso facto*, intitle him to the other.

CORNISH.

From what you say, it should follow, that it is *property* and not *people* that are *represented*.

CONNOR.

That seems manifestly to be the case.

FERGUS.

What think ye, then, of the house of P—rs, some serve in their own persons, others are represented, and yet we cannot say, that the qualification of an elector arises from his property !

LEICESTER.

Let us not embarrass our present discussion with that part of the constitution ; we'll first consider what relates to commoners only, and treat that part of the subject at another time.

CORNISH.

Well then, I say, there is property, to a very great amount, in this island, that has no representative in P—t, no more than has the property of Ireland, or America.

LEI-

LEICESTER.

If you mean *copy or leasehold lands*, tho' such distinctions are useless, and may be considered as a blemish in our system at this time of day; yet you know it may be answered, that such lands are already represented by the lords of the manors who possess the freehold of them;—or if you mean such property as may be in the hands of women, infants, ideots, or paupers below the legal standard of qualification.—

CORNISH.

No, I mean none of those, but will explain myself, and save you the trouble of guessing.—I say, then, that the rents which particulars draw from the *public funds* alone, are sufficient, as to their amount, to qualify thirty candidates for every seat in P—t; but as the revenue from the funds is not that sort of property that can legally qualify either the elector or the candidate, it will be found on calculation, that there are about 450,000 people maintained thereby, who, though they may be resident within the island, where this property is supposed to exist, yet have, in consequence thereof,

no

no representative either in Great-Britain, or any where else.

LEICESTER.

What you say, is certainly true, so far as regards their property in the funds, which I consider as a very great irregularity and an inconvenience in our system; and I look upon these 450,000 stock pensioners, as so many idle by-standers; to maintain whom, the land labourers and manufacturers must work so much the harder, or must put themselves upon shorter diet, in order to spare somewhat for these idle men of imaginary property;---whence arises this outcry of dearth of provisions, and high price of labour: But as the funds are a very new and singular kind of property, very different indeed from our colonies, these being the off-spring of frugality and industry, and those of war and dissipation, I suppose, we have not had time to understand the whole of their nature and effect in our constitution, so as to make them thoroughly suitable therewith.

PENN.

PENN.

Yet, thus far, the administration have considered justly in regard to the proprietors of the funds, namely, that since that part of British property has no representative in P—t, they exempt it from paying any taxes whatever.

CORNISH.

Well said, Mr. Penn, the administration are certainly much obliged to you, for finding so equitable a reason for that policy, which, I'll venture to say, they never thought of themselves.

CONNOR.

There's no doubt, Mr. Cornish, but your remark here is historically just, the exemption from taxes was calculated as an invitation extraordinary to foreigners, as well as natives; but since we must allow that Mr. Penn's reason is an equitable one, we may as well indulge him in supposing that it did operate something thereto; for, I am of opinion, that if the political one had not already caused the end to be obtained, the equitable one would have forced its way at last.

L E I.

LEICESTER.

I incline much to your opinion, Mr. Connor ;—the Roman history furnishes us with an instance not very wide of the mark : —It is well known now to all the world, that notwithstanding the great increase of dominion to that republic, their selfish and contracted views prevented them from bestowing the freedom of their city, on even their most antient and faithful allies ; vainly hoping that poized on the same narrow basis on which their government had stood in the infancy of the republic, confined to the inhabitants of a small circle round Rome, they might still continue to lord it over their distant and extended provinces. The first effect of which selfish policy, was, a civil war with their Italian allies and colonies (called the social war,) to whom in the end, and after a great deal of blood spilled, they were obliged to grant with an ill grace, what, a *sounder policy* would have taught them to offer before it was demanded :— the second was, that continuing still under the same error of affecting to keep all the world under the government of a *small se-*

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nate

nate chosen from a territory very narrow and disproportioned to the extent of their dominions, *posts, and offices* of power and profit become more numerous than the *senators* themselves; the wealth of the world centering in so few hands, soon put an end to all order, and a daring servant overturned this narrow-bottomed republic by the event of a single battle.

CORNISH.

What different pictures may be drawn from the same original! You seem to mark out in this bold sketch, that the Romans delayed too long to make their allies and *colonists* citizens of Rome; and Mr. Montesquieu, on the other hand, assigns their granting that privilege at all, to such vast numbers, as one of the chief causes of their ruin.

PENN.

I can very well see, that Mr. Leicester had one eye on his original, the Roman story, and the other on a subject much nearer his heart;—neither the Romans nor Mr. Montesquieu, it is probable, thought of, or considered fully, the happy
ex-

expedient so well known in our constitution, and which, without doubt, Mr. Leicester had in his mind, I mean that of a people exercising their power by representatives; for had the Romans known this most excellent contrivance, (or, if Mr. Montesquieu had fully considered it, I think he would have found out that) there was, even in Cæsar's time, both virtue and good sense enough remaining to have adopted it, and by that medium to have extended their citizenship and form of government to all their dominions.—For, certainly they ruined their government by the abuse of two extremes, a *senate* too small, considering the extent of their power and their duration, as they sat for life;——and an assembly of commons (with power of deliberating, haranguing and rashly enacting) whose numbers were so excessive that it was almost impossible to meet without riot and confusion.

F E R G U S.

I do not see that this method would altogether prevent that confusion; for, if the representatives be increased in proportion

portion to the accession of dominion, their numbers may rise so high as to make the maintenance of order utterly impossible.

PENN.

Good orders will do a great deal; we know that the great council at Venice consists now of about a thousand members, it has been heretofore above three times as many, they both deliberate and vote, and they never run into confusion.

CONNOR.

But, supposing the danger of confusion out of the question, how could such a matter be effected, how would it be possible to settle such a proportion of *representatives* from the *provinces*, as should be thought on all hands to be neither too much, nor too little?

FERGUS.

This would be a difficulty indeed, for, there are many people who do not think that *colonies* or *conquered countries* have any right to expect such a favour at all.

CON-

CONNOR.

Such people as those we should refer to hear another chapter of Mr. Leicester's Roman history ; but in fact we have no body of people, properly speaking, under that circumstance ; for, admitting we have *conquered lands* in America, or elsewhere, if the conquered inhabitants conform strictly to the British tests of allegiance and religion, their children become free-born subjects to all intents and purposes, and may, by purchasing estates in the mother-country, become members of the legislature ; if they do not conform, they are treated as foreigners living under the protection of our laws, but incapable of enjoying posts, or exercising any legislative or executive power whatever.— On the other hand, when a native of the mother-country buys an estate in a conquered province, would it not be contrary to all reason to suppose, that he has, thereby, forfeited his native rights, and fallen into a degree of slavery ?

COR-

CORNISH.

No, no, we must not suppose that.—
 However, I do not see, that laying taxes
 on the Americans, similar to what we
 lay on ourselves, and regulating their trade
 so as it may not interfere with our own,
 can be considered as subjecting them to
 any thing like slavery.—For, when they
 left this country, it was for their own
 pleasure, on a prospect of private advan-
 tage; they did not put themselves under
 foreign protection, they continued still
 under ours; they left the legislative
 power, to which they were subject, here
 behind them, and here it has remained
 ever since, and here I hope it will ever re-
 main without diminution.—For here lies
 the point, the right, the right, Sir; and if
 we give way now, there's an end of the
 dignity——

FERGUS.

No! no, Mr. Cornish, I cannot join
 you there; for, in my opinion, neither
 an individual nor a community can de-
 rive any dignity, respect, or authority,
 from

from obstinately adhering to a measure after it is discovered to be a wrong one ; —the wisest may be drawn into error by oversight, or through artful misrepresentation ; but it is the part of folly or knavery only, to continue wilfully therein, on any pretence whatever, after the discovery is made ;—therefore I hope we shall make use of no such arguments here among ourselves, though I must own, with concern, I have heard them in the mouths of men of some figure. I am more afraid of losing, than in hopes of gaining, by pushing punctilios too far ; and am persuaded that the supremacy of the pope would have lasted entire to this day, or that episcopacy would never have been banished from Scotland, if the hot-heads of those times had not urged their rights with too high a hand.

LEICESTER.

I entirely agree with you, Mr. Fergus, and therefore let us consider, of what use can it be to demonstrate a legal right (by the help of a parcel of absurd *fictions*) if,
after

after all we should want power to support that right?—Or, what wise man would think of exerting his power, if the exertion was more likely to hurt than to avail him?—I may assert, that I have a natural right to cut off one of my own limbs; and I may prove, that, taking a hatchet in my right hand, I have power to chop off the left;—but what benefit shall I derive from this manly exertion?—Our American provinces, as far as they are peopled, became so, from the freedom that adventurers found they could enjoy there, and from the advantages which that freedom afforded to commerce;—if that freedom and those advantages were taken away, by restraints and taxations laid on, against the will of the inhabitants, that is, at the pleasure of an external power, there can be no doubt, that such an operation would exactly undo all that the contrary method had been doing; and that the swarms of people which fled thither, from the calamities of Britain, during the civil wars, and afterwards from Ireland, by reason of the restraints laid on
their

their manufactures and commerce, I say, it could not be doubted, but those swarms of people (or their descendants) would search for some new assylum, and abandon the lands once more to their original savages.

CORNISH.

Do you think, then, if we were to enforce so just a law, as requiring a moderate aid from these people, that their high-spiritedness would carry them so far, as to abandon their estates and such immense property as some of them have got there, and to expose themselves to all the hardships and poverty of new adventurers?

LEICESTER.

I am clearly of that opinion, but will not take up our time now, in saying any thing farther in support of it, because I do not see how such a law could be enforced:—for where people have immense property, they must of course have immense power; and, with such a people, according to the principles of our constitution,

ton, nothing can be done, but by their own consent, that is, if we want their aid, or, in other words, if we want them to bear some part of our burdens, we must allow them also a share in our privileges ; for, I can hardly think there was ever any body visionary enough to propose, that, in imitation of the Great Turk, we should send a basha, with a fleet and army, to collect the tribute of the empire.

CONNOR.

No, surely ;—that's an absurdity so glaring, that it needs only to be mentioned, the confutation arises instantly in the mind of the hearer.—But, as I was saying, Mr. Penn, (a little while ago) supposing the number of representatives to be raised to a thousand, how could that number be allotted and proportioned?

PENN.

Nothing more easy.—For why may we not imitate what we see successfully practised every day by private persons, who associate themselves to carry on projects of trade or other lucrative adventures, which require the advance and risk of a considerable

derable capital, and the exercise of skill and judgment in the conduct thereof.— They usually divide the sum total of the required capital into a certain number of parts or shares, to each of which parts they annex the right of one vote; the subscribers engage, according to their abilities or inclination; and he who buys the greatest number of shares, that is, he who runs the greatest risk, and pays the greatest part of the expence, has also the greatest number of votes in that community.

CORNISH.

My good Sir, do you mean that, by this fine project, we should open a door for five or six hundred Americans to come in and vote us out of our own house?

LEICESTER.

I see no reason to apprehend that, unless we can suppose the Americans able and willing to pay five or six parts in ten of the public expence, that is, about five or six millions per annum;—for in that manner, if I understand Mr. Penn rightly, the desire, in any one part of the

state to over-rule the rest by an undue majority of votes or representatives, would be curbed by the excessive price they must pay for them.

P E N.

That is exactly my meaning.

LEICESTER.

And I think nothing can be more equitable.

C O N N O R.

But however equitable and pleasing such a scheme may appear at first sight, might not some of our provincial politicians reject it on this account, “ That their narrow circumstances would only enable
“ them to pay such a sum as would intitle
“ them to have very few representatives or
“ votes, which, besides the smallness of
“ their number, might easily be practised
“ upon, if a minister was so inclined; and
“ whatever should happen afterwards, they
“ could make no just complaint, as they
“ would then have a legal representative.”

LEICESTER.

I can easily conceive, that a very obvious alteration in the mode of election, and
the

the duration of their sitting limited to a short period, would make the practices of the minister, which you hint at, both impracticable and unprofitable.

CORNISH.

Very likely, Sir.—But I should fancy, that upon trial this obvious alteration of yours would go so much against the stomachs of some of our countrymen, that it could never be got down; nay, would disgust them to that degree, that I think they would not suffer any plan to be brought before them that favoured of such a doctrine. For do we not consider our interest in boroughs as a part of our estates, and consequently any such alteration, as you intimate, would be an immediate violation of private property, which we can never consent to.

LEICESTER.

My dear Cornish, I know you have too much public virtue to insist on so mean an argument, which is no whit better than that offered by a gentleman some years ago, in opposition to the projectors of a new harbour on a dangerous part of the coast,

coast, namely, “ that their scheme would
 “ prejudice his rights as Lord of the Manor,
 “ by depriving him of the benefit of wrecks.”
 Representatives were undoubtedly intend-
 ed, from their origin, to have been elect-
 ed by the free votes of a free people ; and
 if by any unforeseen accidents they have
 fallen in particular places into a different
 channel, such alterations are an abuse of
 the original institution, and should be rec-
 tified as soon as they become manifest.

P E N N.

Though I am of your opinion, Mr.
 Leicester, yet from what I have observed
 of mankind, both in the histories of times
 past and of our own, I have found that
 bodies politic are as squeamishly averse to
 medicines as the most froward children,
 nothing but the immediate fear of dissolu-
 tion, or the force of bribes, can prevail
 with them to take any thing under the
 name of physic ; in short, there is nothing
 they seem to hate so much as to be mend-
 ed. Therefore I should be for leaving
 every part of the old system as it now is,
 that every kingdom, or province, should
 continue

continue its parliament, assembly, or whatever other form of internal government it is possessed of, and defray all its own expences within itself ; and superadd, for the *union* and utility of the *whole*, a new *sovereign council*, consisting of deputies from each province of this great common-wealth, according to the plan before-mentioned ; that is, each province to send as many deputies as should correspond with a proportional share of the general public expence, which on all occasions they must pay. That *this* should be in the place of *that* commonly called the *privy council*, and should be always sitting to *advise the crown* in all the *public concerns* of the *common wealth*, of *peace* and *war*, and the sums of *money* proper to be raised. That the boards of *treasury*, *admiralty*, and *trade*, should be executed by *committees* of this council, and that the office of *Lord Constable* should be revived, but the execution thereof lodged in the hands of a *fourth committee*, which should have the same power over the *army*, as the Admiralty has over the *fleet*. That the *acts* of this *great council*, with the *King's assent*, shall be binding
over

over the whole common-wealth ; but that they shall meddle with nothing that can be considered as the peculiar business of any one province in particular ; that after it has decreed what sums shall be raised, each province shall be left to find such *ways and means* for raising their quota as they shall think most proper for their own condition.

C O N N O R.

But if the members of this great council are never to be dissolved, as I think you propose they should always be sitting, might not a practising minister soon be able to mould them to his humour ?

P E N N.

Sir, though I say they should always be sitting (that is, there should be no dissolution, though they might have some recesses by adjournments) it would not, however, be in the power of a minister to practice much upon, them as I should contrive matters ; for after the first year, the several provinces should be obliged to recall half their number, and send new ones in their places, and every year following to
do

do the same thing ; so that every year one half of the council would be new men, and all those who went out should be incapable of being re-elected for the space of two years ensuing.

C O N N O R.

Well, but might not something be done with the members of the four great committees ? for two years (the time which each member may continue in the council) would be long enough to admit of practices.

P E N N.

That should be provided against in this manner. Let us suppose, that each of these four committees consisted of six members, to be chosen by ballot in the Venetian manner, that each committee should, by the same method, chuse a chairman, who should have power of first Lord, or first Commissioner, in the manner of the present boards, for the space of one month, at the expiration whereof he should leave the committee, and be incapable of being re-elected therein for twelve months ensuing. His place as a committee

E

man

man should be supplied by ballot from and by the great council, and the vacancy of first Lord, or chairman, filled up in like manner by the committee, and so on *toties quoties*.—And by these means, I think, very little room would be left for practices.

CONNOR.

Would you give this great council power of impeachment and attainder ?

PENN.

Certainly, in all matters that concerned their own body, or the general welfare, or that could not be determined properly by any one province, they should have full parliamentary power.

FERGUS.

I observe you draw a good deal from the Venetian model; but is it not notorious, that their government is particularly deficient in the very point which we seem to want, namely, the government of distant provinces, they having lost most part of their dominions on the *Terra Firma*, and their distant islands ?

PENN.

PENN.

I have only imitated some part of what I think they are most perfect in, and have avoided their only error, that is, their selfish principle, which, by confining the whole of their power and freedom to the nobles only, made it impossible for so small a number (being at most but 4000 families, and now not above 1000) to keep the numerous inhabitants of distant provinces (who were still masters of their own lands) in a slavish obedience to the laws of a government, in which, having no manner of share, they of course were neither interested to support, nor willing to obey, any longer than they were compelled *vi & armis*. Which violence, being directly contrary to the genius of trade, will always be found ruinous, if not impracticable, in a commercial state. Their great council never changes but as some die and as young men grow up, because in fact it takes in the whole community of freemen, the rest of the inhabitants being only like sojourning strangers as to their personal rights, and as slaves with respect

to their property. Whereas the great council here proposed, being only a representative of millions of freemen, is half changed every year, and totally every two years; and the intervals of two years, during which old members are kept out, gives opportunity for so many other able persons to step into the service of their country, that the idea of being governed by a cabal, or junto, can never arise to give jealousy or uneasiness to the most distant provinces, who, on the contrary, will all feel that they have an equitable share in the administration.

CORNISH.

But why do you propose to revive the office of Lord Constable, which, as we are told, was suppressed for having had too much power annexed to it to be trusted in the hand of any subject?

PENN.

That might have been the case when it was in the hands of an individual for life and hereditary; but when exercised by the joint judgment of six chosen men, the
chairman

chairman having only a casting vote when necessary to prevent a stop in business by an equality of voices ; these six persons changing every month, and as soon as they quit their committee, immediately accountable for any mal administration ; I say, such a power, so lodged, runs very little risk of being abused. Besides, in truth, it is my opinion, that the constitution has never been perfect since the suppression of this office ; which, in order that the King should do no wrong, had provided officers in every branch of the executive, who were to act under his name, but were accountable in their own persons. The power of interested ministers working on the weakness of former princes, in pursuit of *reversionary grants*, converted many temporary offices into hereditary ones. Under such a change of order it would naturally happen sometimes, that the office would be disgraced by the hands it fell into ; such incongruities, I presume, made this office odious both to King and people, when unfortunately they saw no middle way to redress the evil, but suppressed it altogether. Had
their

there been a constable in the reign of Charles the first, that unhappy Prince could not have fallen into those errors which overturned the government and himself. But when the Prince can take the sword of war into his own hand, dismiss officers, and garble an army, as James the II^d did, I think the maxim, that the *King can do no wrong*, seems somewhat problematical, and the Prince thereby left occasionally exposed, in his own person, to the resentment of his people, for want of an immediate officer, on whom the blame of any misdoing might justly fall.

FERGUS.

Well, this is a very pretty scheme, Mr. Penn; but, I doubt, if you were to publish it, it would fare no better than many other ingenious projects of speculative men of the last age; all which sleep very quietly on the upper shelves of our modern virtuosi;—for the grand difficulty (and which, I fear, is insurmountable) is, how to persuade any man, or set of men, to part with any portion of power which they
now

now have, and think themselves strong enough to keep.

P E N.

Why, really Sir, I should think myself a very shallow politician indeed, if I had supposed men could be persuaded to part with any thing they liked, unless it were for a valuable consideration or when forced thereto by necessity. But as I am of opinion, that such positions do now and then occur in public affairs as necessarily require material alterations, I have maturely considered on this subject from a persuasion, that one time or other we shall be under a necessity of adopting such a system, or one very like it, to save us from something worse. But I repeat, that I am sure we shall never do it, till forced by necessity. If you'll allow me to relate to you what I know to have happened in a private family, you may judge from thence what might also fall out in a larger society under similar circumstances.

L E I-

We are all attentive ; pray go on.

PENN.

A country gentleman, master of a well conditioned manor of a thousand pounds a year, had half a score children portioned by settlement with about a thousand pounds a piece ; he prudently considered, though bred up in his youth to arms, that the most certain and effectual way of encreasing his fortune, and raising that of his children, was to apply himself to farming his own lands and bringing up his sons to merchandize ; by which means they soon became not only able to maintain themselves, by employing their little fortunes in merchant-venturing, but were also very useful to their father, in taking off all his products, even at his own price ; such was their filial affection towards him.---But unhappily the old gentleman increased not in virtue, as he did in the prosperity of his circumstances, on the contrary, like Noah when he took to drinking, he turned out a very debauched old fellow ; so that under the influence of his bad example and inattention to his affairs, his servants plundered him at home,
and

and his steward, who went snacks with the lawyers, engaged him in broils and disputes with his neighbours, till he became so involved in debt, that he was no longer able to pay his labourers wages, and support his current expences; in which distress he conceived the rash project of drawing bills of exchange on his sons, payable at sight without farther advice.---The sons, who had always punctually paid their father for what they bought of his goods, and had never received of him any thing but their own fortunes, were alarmed at this innovation; and imputing it to the ill advice of his servants, who had so much the ascendant over him, that they (though his flesh and blood) were treated as strangers in the family house; I say, his sons, alarmed at this innovation, wrote an humble remonstrance to their father, beseeching him not to take such an arbitrary course with them.—But he, spirited up by his wicked servants, who kept him constantly drunk,—flung their letter back without reading, and would hear nothing from them;—swore in a great passion that as he was their father, whatever was their's, was his;—that if they refused to render quiet-

ly what he demanded, he would send and take it by force, and punish them corporally for their disobedience.—At this, the sons, (who were affectionate and loved their parent, though they grieved for the weakness of his dotage,) were obliged to convince the old gentleman that they were no longer of an age to be treated as infants, seeing they were all married and had families of their own ;—they protested his bills, and refused to take any more of his wool or corn ; by which his distresses were doubled, for he had so quarrelled with all his neighbours that none of them cared to buy any thing of him.—However these last difficulties soon brought him to a better understanding, and instead of going to law with his sons, as his roguish steward advised, he was become sober enough to consider that the only issue of such a contest must be, either to ruin them or be ruined himself, either of which would be to lose the fruit he had been so long labouring for, that of establishing his family in wealth and prosperity ; wherefore, continuing still sober, he desired an interview with them, ingenuously acknowledged how he had been misled and abused by a pack of profligate servants,

vants, offered to take his sons into partnership with him, and desired they would assist him in reforming his house.—Which they, as they never wanted filial affection and a true sense of their duty, readily consented to ; and they now are the family of the greatest *power and consideration in their country.*

At the end of this discourse we all sat staring at one another, nobody, I believe, knowing well what to say, when a servant came in to tell us, supper was on the table, which put an end to this conference.—And here also I beg leave to finish my letter ; from your's &c.

Jan. 12, 166.

P O S T C R I P T.

I had almost forgot to tell you, that after supper, when some remarks were made on the foregoing subject, one of the company, who had taken no part in the argument before, observed, that Mr. Penn was not so very singular, nor new in his propositions as some of the gentlemen seemed to think, for, says he, tossing a ragged paper on the table, “ I have had that plan
“ in my pocket for several months past,

“ and the person from whom I received it,
 “ said it was handing about, and, as he
 “ supposed, was under some sort of pub-
 “ lic consideration.” With the gentle-
 man’s leave I borrowed it till the next day,
 and the following is a copy of it.

Scheme of representatives to a
 general parliament, proportioned to the
 probable numbers of people in each pro-
 vince, and to the certain sums to be con-
 tributed by each province to the general
 fund for public service, that is, for the
 support of *common government* in peace and
 war, (the particular support of each pro-
 vincial government being to be left to its
 own internal management) being after
 the rate of 10,000*l.* per annum, to be
 contributed by each province for every
 member sent by them; (when 52*l.* per
 annum was the parliamentary allow-
 ance for a seaman, viz. at 4*l.* per month.)
 The amount of the people supposed in
 each province, is put somewhat arbitrarily,
 in such even numbers as will divide by
 20,000; that being the number of people
 which, by this scheme, is supposed able
 to contribute a sum sufficient to intitle
 them to send one representative. But

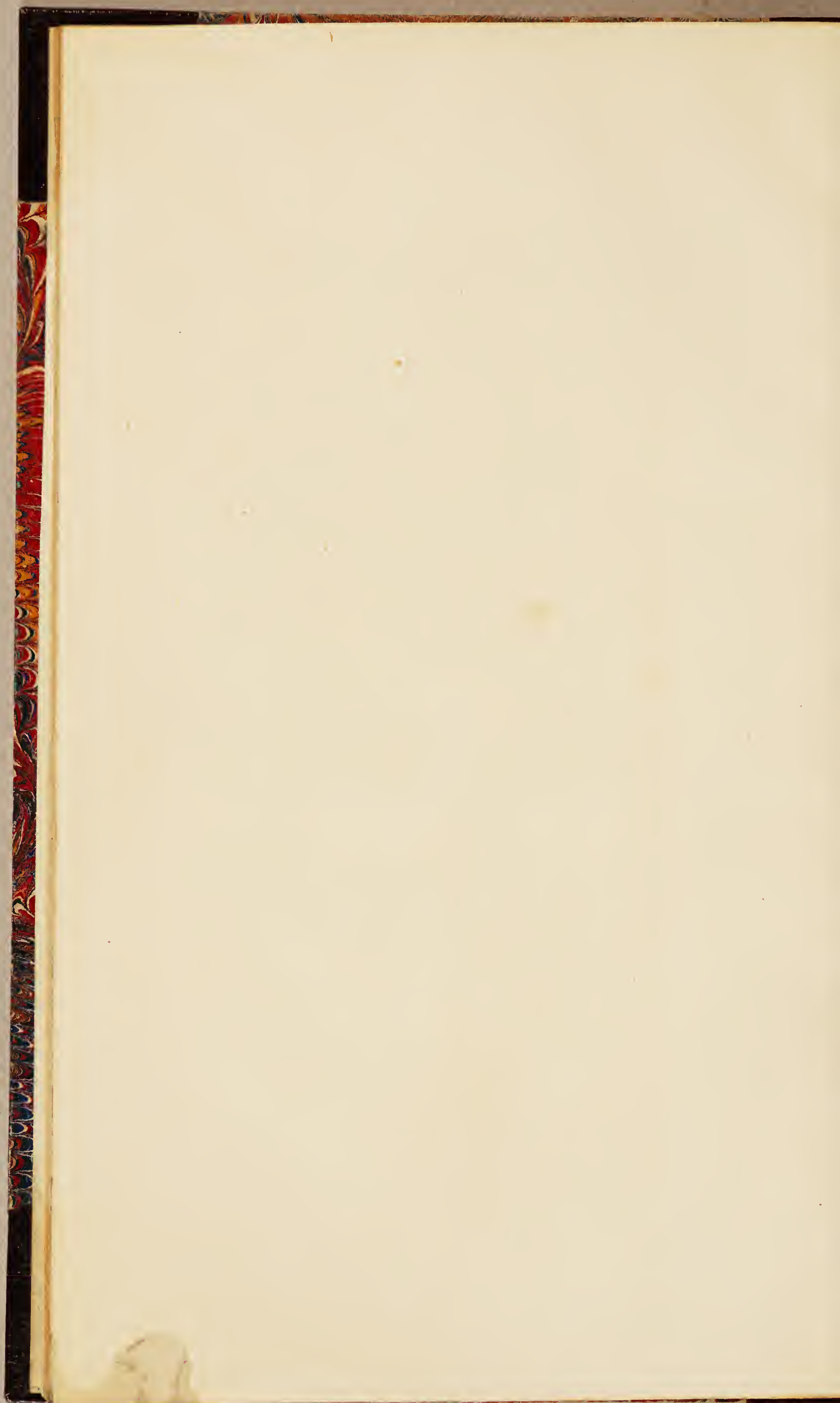
moreover, as by this plan, property, rather than barely the numbers of people, gives the title of sending representatives,—each province having right to send one member for every 10,000 l. they contribute annually to the general fund; so the provinces where, by their situation, great part of their work is done by slaves, or where great numbers of the people are disqualified, by being Papists, may nevertheless find among them a sufficient number of qualified men to represent them, in proportion to their wealth and contributions.—All present taxes, duties, &c. to be repealed.

The probable number of persons in the whole dominion, at this time, is 16,760,000, which being divided by 20,000, will make 838 parts, or shares, in the whole; and supposing the several provinces able and willing to send, for each such share, one member, and in consideration thereof to contribute 10,000 l. to the general fund (more or less, according to the annual necessity) the whole would make a revenue of 8,380,000 l. which in detail may be stated in the following manner :

(40)

Names of Provinces.	Supposed No. of People	No. of Shares, which is also the No. of Re- presentatives.	Sums of Money con- tributed to the ge- neral Fund or pub- lic Revenue.
Canada, and it its De- pendencies }	100,000	5	£50,000
Nova-Scotia, C. Breton and Newfoundland }	20,000	1	10,000
Massachusetts - - -	280,000	14	140,000
New Hampshire - - -	40,000	2	20,000
Connecticut - - -	200,000	10	100,000
Rhode-Island - - -	80,000	4	40,000
New York - - - -	160,000	8	80,000
Jerseys - - - - -	120,000	6	60,000
Pensylvania - - -	280,000	14	140,000
Maryland - - - - -	160,000	8	80,000
Virginia - - - - -	280,000	14	140,000
N. Carolina - - - -	40,000	2	20,000
S. Carolina - - - -	80,000	4	40,000
Georgia, E. & W. Flor. Bermudas & Bahamas }	20,000	1	10,000
All North America	1,860,000	93	930,000
Barbadoes - - - - -	100,000	5	50,000
Jamaica - - - - -	180,000	9	90,000
Antigua - - - - -	60,000	3	30,000
Nevis, St. Kitt's, Mont- ferratt, Grenada, St. Vincent's, &c. }	60,000	3	30,000
All the W. Ind. Islan.	400,000	20	200,000
England and Wales - -	10,000,000	500	5,000,000
Scotland - - - - -	1,500,000	75	750,000
Ireland - - - - -	3,000,000	150	1,500,000
G. Britain and Ireland	14,500,000	725	7,250,000
Grand Total of the British Dominion }	16,760,000	838	8,380,000

N. B. It is supposed, that the increase of people and wealth in the new provinces would soon raise the number of shares to a thousand, and the proportional revenue of course to ten millions. Thus, on this plan, the increase of dominion, by extending our colonies, would neither be dangerous to our liberties, nor an addition to our expences; but on the contrary, like the new buildings in the parishes of Marybone and St. George, would lighten the taxes of the old ones.



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